

State of the Union 2003:
Promises Made, Promises Kept

In his 2003 State of the Union address before Congress and the nation, President Bush promised a stronger economy, a more financially secure generation of seniors and a safer world for all. A man of action, a man of strict determination, a man of resolve, President Bush kept his promises.

The War on Terror: Iraq

* The Promise: Saddam Hussein, "a brutal dictator, with a history of reckless aggression, with ties to terrorism, with great potential wealth, will not be permitted to dominate a vital region and threaten the United States ... I have a message for the ... people of Iraq: ... the day he and his regime are removed from power will be the day of your liberation."

* The Progress: March 19, 2003: President Bush launches Operation Iraqi Freedom; May 1, 2003: President Bush announces end to major combat operations in Iraq; December 15, 2003: Los Angeles Times headline reads: "Hussein Captured: Army Finds Him Hiding in Pit."

The War on Terror: Afghanistan

* The Promise: "In Afghanistan, we helped liberate an oppressed people. And we will continue helping them secure their country, rebuild their society, and educate their children."

* The Progress: Congress passed the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act, authorizing \$3.47 billion in aid. The U.S. is assisting in the repair of more than 2,500 miles of roads, has delivered over 400,000 metric tons of food, helped reconstruct more than 25 bridges and has aided in the rehabilitation of over 6,000 water wells, canals, dams and water systems. Thousands of Afghan girls are now attending school-an illegal act under the Taliban.

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Homeland Security

* The Promise: "As we fight this war, we will remember where it began-here, in our own country. This government is taking unprecedented measures to protect our people and defend our homeland."

* The Progress:

- o The Department of Homeland Security officially opened March 1, 2003, integrating border protection, transportation security, critical infrastructure security, and crisis response into a single department.
- o The Administration will make over \$5 billion available to state and local governments in 2004 to give the nation's first responders and public health system the training and equipment to prepare, prevent and respond to any future attack.

- o The U.S. is involved in the diplomatic efforts necessary to bring Japan, South Korea, China and Russia to the table for unprecedented discussions with North Korea on ending its nuclear weapons program.
- o The U.S. has taken the lead on deterring and defending against WMD,

developing defenses against ballistic missiles and improving our capacity to protect against chemical and biological attacks, including the creation of a new system called BioWatch to detect biological attacks against major U.S. cities.

The Economy

* The Promise: "Jobs are created when the economy grows; the economy grows when Americans have more money to spend and invest; and the best and fairest way to make sure Americans have that money is not to tax it away in the first place ... Instead of gradually reducing the marriage penalty, we should do it now. Instead of slowly raising the child credit to \$1,000, we should send the checks to American families now."

* The Progress: On May 28, 2003, President Bush signed the Jobs and

Growth Tax Relief Act into law, decreasing the marriage penalty and increasing the child credit and delivering immediate relief to all taxpayers, including over 23 million small business owners.

o As a result, in the third quarter of 2003, the economy grew by a 20-year record of 8.2 percent.

o At 5.7 percent, the unemployment rate in December was lower than the average unemployment rates of the 1980s, the 1990s and the 30-year historical average.

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Prescription Drugs for Seniors

* The Promise: "Health care reform must begin with Medicare; Medicare is the binding commitment of a caring society. We must renew that commitment by giving seniors access to preventive medicine and new drugs that are transforming health care in America."

* The Progress: On December 8, 2003, President Bush signed into law the bipartisan Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act, providing a prescription drug coverage option under Medicare to over 40 million seniors.

Aiding the AIDS Crisis

* The Promise: "I ask the Congress to commit \$15 billion over the next five years, including nearly \$10 billion in new money, to turn the tide against AIDS in the most afflicted nations of Africa and the Caribbean."

* The Progress: Only 4 months later, Congress passed legislation authorizing the Emergency Plan based on the President's proposal.

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